

THE AMERICAN ILLUSTRATED MEDICAL DICTIONARY, 21st edition, W. A. Newman Dorland. W. B. Saunders Company, 1947.

Included in this edition are additions from the research and discovery of the war years, such, for example, as the specialties of tropical medicine and aviation medicine as well as the subject of antibiotics, physics and nucleonics, including radioactive isotopes. Names of numerous obsolete proprietary medicines have been deleted.

It is unfortunate that spelling of plurals of Latin and Greek words has not been included. It would be a considerable convenience, for instance, for a medical student to discover along with the derivation and definition of the word "diverticulum" that the proper plural was "diverticula."

COMMUNAL SICK CARE IN THE GERMAN GHETTO. By Jacob R. Marcus, Ph.D. The Hebrew Union College Press. 1947. Priced, \$4.00.

This book will be of use to physicians interested in the history of medicine as it gives the development of the care of the sick by the Jews in the Middle Ages and compares such care with the type of service given by Christian guilds.

Socialization of the care of the Jewish sick dates back to Medieval times.

The actual practice of medicine and surgery is barely mentioned. Hence the book will be of slight interest to the practicing physician.

PYE'S SURGICAL HANDICRAFT. Edited by Hamilton Bailey, F.R.C.S., Eng. Fifteenth Edition. Fully Revised with 789 Illustrations. The Williams and Wilkins Company, Baltimore. Published 1947.

The editor, Hamilton Bailey, has revised the last previous edition of three years before, with the help of over forty collaborators. A relatively small book, it covers pre- and post-operative care, radiology, general surgery, and nearly all the surgical specialties. Necessarily most of the considerations are brief, and provide only basic information for anyone not familiar with the subject. Many of the methods are at some variance with those used in this country. Penicillin and heparin are barely mentioned, dicumarol is not discussed. The book could best be recommended as a source for comparison, or for the gleaning of occasional helpful technical points.



MEDICAL JURISPRUDENCE

HOSPITALS: LIABILITY—DEGREE OF CARE

PEART, BARATY & HASSARD, *San Francisco*

In a case reported in 80 A.C.A. 934 (Aug. 1, 1947) an action was brought against a hospital charging negligence which resulted in the death of an eight months old baby. The complaint alleged that plaintiff and his wife caused their eight-month-old baby to be placed in the defendant hospital for the removal of a haemangioma on the child's shoulder. At the time of performing the operation ether was administered to the child which rendered her unconscious and after her removal from the operating room she was placed in a room in which there were four or five other patients. She was placed in her crib on her abdomen with a small pillow under her and with her head and face slightly lower than her abdomen and lying on her right cheek. The mother sat at the side of the child for 15 or 20 minutes, after which the nurse in charge came into the room and ordered the mother, and the other mothers in the room, to leave while the nurses bathed the other children. When Mrs. T., the mother of the child, returned to the room a short while later she noticed that her baby was very white and that the fingernails were blue and her hands were cold, whereupon she asked the nurse's aid whether her baby was all right and was told that the baby was just sleeping from the ether, but at Mrs. T.'s insistence the nurse's aid picked up the baby and found that she was dead. Later the cause of death was determined to be atelectasis. The mother and father of the child alleged

that the hospital was negligent in failing to give proper attention to the child and alleged that as a result the child was smothered. At the conclusion of the evidence offered by the mother and father, a motion for nonsuit was granted. The mother and father appealed and the District Court of Appeal reversed the judgment of nonsuit.

In reversing the judgment of nonsuit the court held that a private hospital owes its patients the duty of protection and that it was the duty of the hospital to use reasonable care and diligence in safeguarding a patient committed to its charge and that such care and diligence is measured by the capacity of the patient to care for himself. In this case the court stated that "by reason of the tender age of appellants' baby, respondent owed a higher degree of care in attending it than if she had been an adult."

Continuing, the court stated that "if the proper observation and care of the child had been maintained, its condition would have been observed and there is a possibility that its life could have been saved." The court felt that the evidence was sufficient to take the case to the jury and that the jury should have determined the question of the hospital's negligence. Therefore, they concluded that "the judgment of nonsuit should be reversed and the case re-tried with the jury determining whether the hospital had exercised the necessary degree of reasonable care under the circumstances."